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### Plant diseases.

INFORMATION regarding plant diseases is accumulating so rapidly, and the interest of practical as well as of scientific men is so keen, that frequent issues of books upon one phase or another of the subject may be confidently expected. The latest to reach us is by George Massee,<sup>4</sup> curator in the cryptogamic division of the Royal Kew Herbarium, London. The book is printed and issued in good and convenient form, and is the best manual yet prepared for the British public. Although not so stated, the point of view is mainly the requirements of cultivators in Great Britain; and while much of the work is applicable to the needs of cultivators in North America, yet it is well to remember that the treatment does not always meet the American conditions or state of knowledge, in spite of the fact that the United States is frequently mentioned.

A general description of fungi and of their modes of inducing disease, with an account of fungicides and their application, occupies about fifty pages. The body of the book, about three hundred pages, and the part upon which the usefulness of the work chiefly depends, is devoted to specific plant diseases. The common name is used as the topic heading, supplemented by the name of the fungus in parenthesis. The diseases are grouped according to the relationship of the parasite. Following the body of the work are a hundred pages of technical descriptions of orders, genera, and species of parasitic fungi mentioned in the previous part, designed to provide the cultivator with a means of identifying the fungi he meets with. The usefulness of this portion of the book may be questioned, as it is without keys, or even the names of hosts or the geographical range. It is, indeed, a very dry bit of bookmaking. A good index to parasites and host-plants, unfortunately in two parts, completes the work.

The part of the work dealing with specific diseases is cast in a concise and serviceable form. The disease is clearly described, preventive or curative measures are given, and some important literature is mentioned, in each instance. The large proportion of the facts and citations, under many of the diseases, that are credited to American sources, is a matter of pride to American vegetable pathologists and a guarantee of the usefulness of the work in the hands of the American cultivator. The illustrations are many and excellent.

Very few and only minor errors occur in the book. The old and oft printed statement is made that *Cystopus candidus* does not form oospores in shepherd's-purse, whereas it always does when the fungus invades the flowers. All Gymnosporangia are said to be heteræcious, but the author overlooked the exceptional *G. Bermudianum*.—J. C. A.

<sup>4</sup> MASSEE, GEORGE: A text-book of plant diseases caused by cryptogamic parasites. 12mo. pp. xii + 458. figs. 92. London: Duckworth & Co. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1899. \$1.60.